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THE PROBLEM, THE SOLUTION AND THE MAN

BY THE EDITOR

THE fact that we live in an age of action, not of thought, is charged with more meaning for us than for those of older countries. They have as guides the beacon lights of their own histories, but the conditions confronting us are without precedent either at home or abroad. Hence the vital need of pausing at intervals in order that we may determine, so far as possible, whether we are being swept unresistingly along a torrent to certain doom or are gliding passively down the river of natural progress to a haven of peace, equality and common happiness. So, while comforting our souls with the reflection that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never come, it nevertheless behooves us, as a prudent people, to remedy artificial evils, which invariably have their genesis in want of thought, by the application of thought itself. The poet Lowell expressed the idea to homely perfection.

"I honor the man who is ready to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think;
And when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will sink t'other half for the freedom to speak,
Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,
Let that mob be the upper ten thousand, or lower."

THE TARIFF AND REVENUE

What, then, is the one great problem upon whose solution

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depends the future of our country and our people? That, in a commercial age, it is economic goes without saying. That, in a sense, it is moral may be accepted as an obvious fact. Recent manifestations of the instinct of an alert-minded people to seek and concentrate upon the concrete readily induce the suggestion that it is the tariff. But the tariff is not a problem. It is no more than a phase become a political issue. Whether imposts should be laid for revenue or protection is a question of importance, to be sure, but of far less importance than in former years when academic judgment outweighed practical considerations. It would be the height of folly to blind our eyes to the conditions that now exist and cannot be changed. We rightfully lament and condemn governmental extravagance, but none can deny that application of the most rigid economy would counterbalance but temporarily the increasing cost of administration of a rapidly growing commonwealth. Despite the enormous revenues now derived from various sources, each day adds two hundred thousand dollars to the deficit, and this sum would have been doubled by the enactment of the absurd pension law recently approved by the House of Representatives. We must, moreover, accept as a fact that actual needs will multiply rather than diminish.

How are these colossal sums to be obtained? By reducing the tariff to a revenue basis? In part, perhaps, but by no means to an extent sufficient to meet the requirements. Let us not deceive ourselves in this regard. No intelligent man now advocates the destruction of our great manufacturing industries through the adoption of free trade with other nations. The utmost that is sought is a lowering of excessive and prohibitive rates to a standard that would enable reasonable competition to kill monopoly. The effect would be a reduction in the cost of products to the consumers and to that extent it would be beneficial. But, clearly, there would ensue no material increase in revenues unless the manufacturer were driven out of business entirely—an outcome contemplated and desired by no one. There is well-grounded belief that manufacturing profits, as a rule, are excessive and should be brought within bounds to the advantage of the consumer, but since there is no thought of abolishing them altogether the industries will survive and prosper, though more moderately, and will continue to meet

the market demands. It is idle, then, to anticipate any increase in revenues approaching adequacy from a lowering of the rates. The tariff, as we have said, is no more than a phase—a phase, indeed, of only a part of the real problem, because essential as the procurement of money for government undoubtedly is, it is as a bagatelle compared with the collateral results.

THE PARAMOUNT PROBLEM

The vital problem now confronting the people of the United States, the problem involving the perpetuity of free institutions, the problem which transcends all economic, political and moral issues, is how to make equitable distribution of the combined earnings of labor and capital without rending the fabric of popular government. The apothegm of Ricardo, still upheld by certain powerful but short-sighted classes in England, to the effect that the laborer is entitled to just enough food and clothing to keep the machinery of his body working until it shall wear itself out, finds no adherents here. We have advanced at least far enough to recognize that humanity is a part, and a very large part, of political economy. But this is only a step. We have much farther to go to insure the supremacy of evolution over revolution as an effective force in the development of civilization. Our colossal fortunes have sprung into being so quickly that there has been hardly time to effect a readjustment of the relationship of Wealth to the State which conserves it, but no thoughtful mind can fail to appreciate that readjustment must be had and soon, not merely for the relief of Labor, but quite as much, if not more, for the protection of Capital itself. We cannot equalize fortunes. "When two men ride a horse, one must ride behind." Nor would we, if we could, sound the death knell of individualism. But we can try to correct methods and influences which have produced great inequalities, and which, if unchecked, cannot fail to make the disparities yet more enormous. True it is that never before and nowhere else has Wealth been so sensible of its duties as it is now and here. It builds hospitals, libraries, schools and colleges without number, but such remedies serve only to palliate the disease. They do not extirpate the germs. The process, moreover, is artificial, discriminatory and offensive to, if not indeed destructive of, the self-respect of the masses.

Less charity and more justice is what the American people want and what they are entitled to receive.

INTERDEPENDENCE AND CO-OPERATION

That is the problem. Where lies the solution? Primarily in the spirit with which the subject is approached. Not independence, but interdependence, has become the law of life in this country. Co-operation, a drawing together in frank and unselfish tolerance of one another's opinions, is positively essential to the settlement of every great question. And this concurrence must be general, must come not only from all groups, but from all sections. Invariably and naturally the older and richer community is the more conservative, the more reluctant to accept innovation, the more obtuse in recognizing either the equities or necessities of change. That the West does not appreciate the extent of its obligation to the East is apparent to the most casual observer, but no less manifest is the East's obduracy in ignoring the teachings of the West. The historian, Woodrow Wilson, depicts with insight and accuracy "the moral of our history."

"The East," he writes, "has spent and been spent for the West: has given forth her energy, her young men and her substance for the new regions that have been a-making all the century through. But has she learned as much as she has taught or taken as much as she has given? The westward march has stopped upon the final slopes of the Pacific. Populations now turn upon their old paths, fill in the places they passed by as neglected in their first journey in search of a land of promise; settle to a life such as the East knows as well as the West—nay, much better. With the change, the pause, the settlement, our people draw into closer groups, stand face to face, to know each other and to be known: and the time has come for the East to learn in her turn; to broaden her understanding of political and economic conditions to the scale of a hemisphere. Let us be sure that we get the national temperament; send our minds abroad upon the continent, become neighbors to all the people that live upon it and lovers of them all."

THE SOUTH AS TEACHER

This is the true spirit—the essence of patriotism indicative of the brotherhood of man. We need not dwell upon the West's resentment against the East nor the East's distrust

of the West. But we do know and must recognize that these unhappy sentiments have pervaded the two sections in the past and have not yet been wholly eradicated. The cure lies in better understanding, to be acquired through fuller acquaintanceship. The South is the natural arbiter because the South, revived and prosperous, more philosophical as a consequence of enforced conditions, has become less dependent upon its sister sections than either the West or the East. By virtue of the genius for statesmanship and clear thinking which it developed in the early days, it was the leader for scores of years and should be the leader now.

Its duty is plain. Out of the happy outcome of its own patient sufferance it may well indicate to the impatient West the advantages to be derived from the exercise of tolerance. From its own bitter experience it can point out clearly to the East that, while great possessions may be lost temporarily to a community, that which a free people come to recognize as a vital truth can never die, that the test of a man's strength and worth is not so much what he achieves as what he overcomes, that brawn weighs less than brain and brain less than character, that even from a selfish view-point it is cheaper to lift human beings up than to hold them down, and that the soundest security for property lies in interesting the largest number of individuals in its preservation and the smallest number in its destruction. Hence the value, the incalculable value to all, of equitable distribution of the combined earnings and accumulations of labor and capital.

How to obtain such apportionment is the question. Not by violence surely. The exercise of mere force, whether physical or legislative, is destructive, not creative, and at best can only clear the way for something different and probably worse. Not by decreeing a new system of government as one would order a new suit of clothes, for the simple reason that the tailor does not live and never has lived who could make it fit. And yet not by compromise of principle which has been aptly described as a good enough umbrella for politics, but a poor roof for statesmanship. It is quite as essential, in this land at this time, that our methods should be orderly as that our aims should be rational.

THE DIRECT TAX

May it not be that the remedy lies in direct taxation?

Why not frankly acknowledge that our government can no longer be fed by those who have little and are constantly getting less, and must be supported by those who have much and are steadily acquiring more? Attempts have been made from time to time to impose adequate taxes upon incomes and inheritances. Some have been insincere; all for one reason or another have been abortive. Is it not now time to undertake the task with resolute determination to succeed? Can a better solution of our most vital problem be devised?

Advocacy of legislation making such imposition does not involve assault upon a class. It is not a contest of classes at all. It is no more or less than recognition of the natural rights of free men to establish a system under which all members of each present and succeeding generation shall possess substantially equal privileges. A tax upon incomes is not, as is so frequently said, a tax upon industry. It is rent of exceptional opportunity, a just payment for peculiar advantages levied in proportion to the gains derived from their exercise. And a tax upon inheritances is not a tax upon the earner, but upon the beneficiary who, having played no part in the making, should be willing to share his bequest with the State whose aid was essential to its acquirement and whose protection continues to be requisite to its preservation.

We are accustomed to regard our very rich as broader and more generous-minded than the very rich of other lands and we set forth in evidence their magnificent benefactions. But making big gifts is quite different from paying big taxes. The former not only gratifies vanity, but presumably paves the way to a place among the angels, while the latter merely discharges a just obligation. So we must expect that the opposition will continue as strong as ever and that the usual arguments must be confuted in fairness and reason. But this is not difficult. There need be no question of double taxation and no antagonism between State and Nation. Co-operation alone is essential. It is useless for a commonwealth to impose a tax which can be evaded by a mere change of residence. But the Federal Government can make such a tax general and conserve all State prerogatives by allowing a reduction equivalent to the amount paid under similar enactment to the State. The would-be dodger would then be compelled to leave the country to avoid bearing his fair share of the total burden. And the

justice of the proposal is indicated by the fact that there is no civilized land from England to Italy to which he could go and obtain better terms than the highest we would think of exacting for the protection of his property.

RECIPROCITY

Other questions, other issues, there are, to be sure, but all are allied with and subordinate to that which is vital and fundamental. We have seen that governmental needs not only exceed present revenues, but must of necessity increase, along with growing population at home and multiplying responsibilities abroad. Clearly, under these conditions, other sources of income must be found before ordinary business prudence will permit the general lowering of tariff rates so much as a shade below the revenue basis. The pending reciprocity bill is a neighborly and commendable act, but none can deny that its practical effect will be a very considerable increase in the present deficit. Its espousal, then, by a responsible Administration, which fails to indicate simultaneously an alternative method of meeting the enhanced deficiency, is political rather than statesmanlike, a mere expedient to appease public wrath, not the inauguration of a policy which could be made general. Proper taxation of incomes and inheritances, however, would render the development possible, feasible and greatly advantageous to the toiling masses.

THE ROOT OF DISCONTENT

No less direct is the relationship to our chief problem of all proposals to loosen the bonds of representative government by the substitution of primaries for conventions, by the election of Senators by popular vote, by adoption of the initiative, referendum and recall. The genesis of these questionable devices is the common and warrantable belief in the minds of the people that the poor bear burdens that should be borne by the rich, and that the failure, so far, of popular will to find expression through enactment of laws makes a change in the system itself essential to readjustment. The present trend towards pure democracy as a substitute for the government of delegated powers established by the Fathers is directly traceable to the obduracy of that alliance of Greed and Wealth which for so many years has controlled the dominant political party. Whether

or not this revolutionary tendency is healthful is a question which need not now be considered. It suffices to point out the causes of its origin and growth—and these are manifest. Can any one believe that assaults upon the principle of representative government would ever have attained their present proportions but for the conviction in millions of minds that the many are being grossly discriminated against in favor of the few, especially in the matter of taxation, and that refusal to tax incomes and inheritances has been deliberate in order to make necessary for revenue purposes heavy imposts upon products essential to maintenance of very existence? There can be no question as to the root of the prevailing discontent and there can be no doubt of the people's full comprehension or of their firm determination to shift the burdens by prudent methods if possible, but by radical measures if necessary.

NO HOPE FROM THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Who is best equipped to meet the situation? One can perceive little ground for hope from the Republican party until it shall be put out of power and be kept out long enough to dissolve its accumulated special partnerships. However good the intentions of a Republican President and even a portion of a Republican Congress may be, recent history proves conclusively that they count practically for naught. The party is tied hand and foot, has made so many trades with all sorts from Mammon to Mormon, has accepted so many favors, has become so dependent upon the power of money, that it is utterly helpless to break its bonds. The Democratic party is inexperienced; it may be ignorant; it has yet to prove itself capable. But it is a fortuitous circumstance that nobody in recent years has considered it worth bribing. Consequently it is at least free, free to do its best without fear or favor, and, so being, should be preferred.

LIBERAL OR CONSERVATIVE

Fifteen months hence the two leading candidates for President will be placed in nomination. One will be labelled Republican, the other Democratic. But the time has passed when a live issue can be raised between mere appellations. The sharp line of demarcation once drawn between the two great organizations has worn away in the roaring

loom of time. The reality will find one regarded by the people as a conservative and the other as a liberal or progressive. Assuming, as we may with reasonable certainty, the renomination of President Taft, but one question in practical politics will confront the Democratic convention. That will relate to the tendency of the great body of voters. Is it towards liberalism or conservatism? If the former, then clearly the Democrats, if wise, will name a man generally recognized as more progressive than Mr. Taft; if the latter, they will designate one regarded as less radical. The relative personal merits of proposed candidates will be weighed naturally and properly, but the final determination will, or should be reached through a balancing of their respective tendencies. All will resolve to the making of the most effective contrast, the one way or the other, with the Republican nominee. It cannot be a difficult task. Mr. Taft occupies middle ground. He is a stand-patter in so far as he pronounces the present tariff law the best ever enacted, and he is an insurgent in his advocacy of that trifling sop to the whale called reciprocity. Although sincerely in favor of improving the government, he is by no means a zealous reformer. His bent is mildly and slowly progressive—and yet sufficiently advanced to be regarded as liberal in contrast with an old-time conservative.

BACKWARD OR FORWARD?

The Democratic party, then, when the time comes to make a choice, will be at the parting of the ways. Which road shall it take? The old familiar path through the meadows, travelled in 1904 and leading presumably to stability and non-interference with things existing, or the new highroad to reform? Shall it wear the garment of the Old Democracy or don the fresh mantle of the New? Shall it face cautiously sidewise, even perhaps a trifle backwards, or shall it raise its eyes fearlessly to the beacon light high up on the mountain-top? The question will be one of judgment no less than of right and all shades of opinion, from the reactionary views of Wall Street to the vagaries of Oregon, will merit consideration. But a careful diagnosis of the present temper of the people clearly indicates that, if an election were to be held to-morrow, a Democratic candidate regarded by the people as less progressive than President Taft would be defeated, and that a candidate generally recog-

nized as being more progressive, more liberal, more radical, if you like, than President Taft would almost as surely win.

There need be no qualification of the first declaration because there appears no statesman answering that description whose intellectual and moral merits could be held to be in any way superior to those of President Taft; nor is there one whose powers of fascination are equal to those of our popular Chief Magistrate. There would be then no compensatory advantages, and the differentiation in policy would shape the result.

It does not follow, on the other hand, that any person reckoned as more progressive or liberal could win. Far from it. President Taft will be a strong and attractive candidate. He has amply demonstrated his good intentions, has fully proven his exceptional abilities and is gradually developing notable capacity for true leadership. In opposition to him, irrespective of political tendencies, must be pitted a man equal in all respects except experience, equal in intellect, in courage, in loyalty to the Constitution, in understanding of democratic institutions, in nobility of character and purpose, in freedom from wrongful influence of class or section, in fidelity to the interests of all the people whose lives, liberties, prosperity and happiness must be safeguarded and conserved by the great Republic which belongs to them and to them alone.

THE DEMOCRATIC FACTIONS

Grant that such an one be found. Can the Democratic party act as a unit? In four successive national elections one faction has defeated the other. Cleveland Democrats voted against Mr. Bryan and Bryan Democrats did not vote for Mr. Parker. Do the differences which have eventuated thus fatally continue irreconcilable now when success seems almost within reach? What reason is there to believe that, left to themselves, the factions divided by the Alleghanies will coalesce without reserve? Can Eastern Democrats be induced to accord freely to Mr. Bryan the position, not of dictator, but of leader, which is rightfully his until the next candidate for President shall be named? Can Mr. Bryan be persuaded to desist from seeking truth in the well so constantly that his vision is circumscribed to his own image? Is a more tolerant, a more considerate, a more

respectful attitude on both sides within the range of possible attainment?

Candor demands the admission that Eastern Democrats have been unjust to Mr. Bryan. To disavow what is honestly believed to be a false doctrine, even to oppose a policy regarded as fatal or wrong, may be and often is a conscientious duty. But to question a man's sincerity, to insinuate sordid motives, to discredit his purposes without cause or proof, is only to invite just resentment and swift retribution. It is not surprising that Mr. Bryan should still consider the seaboard metropolis, if not the enemy's country, at least as unfairly inimical.

MR. BRYAN AND THE EAST

But the East has no monopoly of wilful uncharitableness. When Mr. Bryan declares that any possible candidacy supported by the New York "World," the New York "Times" and "Harper's Weekly" "must be viewed with suspicion" he implies much that he must know to be unwarranted. Surely he must be aware that many years before he himself became a public character Joseph Pulitzer began a warfare upon plutocracy which has been continued unwaveringly and unceasingly. If ever there was a public journal of proven independence and unsusceptibility to wrongful influence everybody knows that the New York "World" is that newspaper. Nor can Mr. Bryan be ignorant of the consistently high-minded and conscientious course of the New York "Times." Of "Harper's Weekly" it suffices to say that the only man whose advice with respect to shaping its policy its present editor has ever sought or received is William Jennings Bryan. True, there have arisen differences of opinion, but Mr. Bryan has no reason whatever to assert that the views of those journals have been one whit less honest or less rightfully intentioned than his own, whose perfect sincerity may be granted. No fair-minded person can withhold admiration of Mr. Bryan's amazing prescience of popular tendencies, but events have seemed to demonstrate that, in a practical sense, it is no less fatal to be too far ahead of the procession than to linger too far behind. The time may come when the people will demand prohibition, for example, or government ownership or initiative, referendum and recall, but that time seemingly is not yet. Consequently, from motives of policy

no less than of principle we suppose we should again differ with Mr. Bryan; but even so, should disagreement upon mere side issues be permitted to prevent unison in upholding fundamental truth?

Herein lies the opportunity of the unbiassed, uncommitted South, the mother of Democracy—to act not merely as umpire between these two factions, but to take the lead, to insist that resentments so ancient as to have become childish be buried, to demand from both greater consideration, more respect for and greater faith in one another, and to make it perfectly clear that manifestations of churlishness by either will meet with stern and effective rebuke.

THE MAN

Let the apportionment of responsibilities be even. The West has furnished the party, as well as the opposition, with the majority, though not the greatest, of its issues. The South is to enforce harmony and amalgamation. The East presents the man—Woodrow Wilson, the highly Americanized Scotch-Irishman, descended from Ohio, born in Virginia, developed in Maryland, married in Georgia, and now delivering from political bondage the State of New Jersey.

Great occasions find great men. Here is one who, if he had lived in the days of Jefferson and Madison, would have rivalled the one as a champion of the people and would have equalled the other in comprehension and lucid expression of fundamental law. No other living personality so happily combines the dominant traits of those two great statesmen; no other has evidenced so perfect a blending of profound knowledge and simple devotion to humanity; no other has shown so clearly how quickly the old truths will spring into new light and power when touched by the magic wand of full sincerity; no other more surely embodies the authority of sustained thought, of unremitting labor for unselfish ends, the spirit of sacrifice and devotion, the instinct of independence, the love of perfect freedom. Born a polemic and controversialist, intellectually combative and self-reliant; fearless to the verge of temerity; indifferent to applause or censure for its own sake; incapable of intrigue; prompt to accept conclusions based upon right *versus* wrong without inquiring or caring whether they be politic or even expedient; persuasive in oratory, but devoid of artifice; too intent, too earnest to employ cheap and paltry de-

vices; his pockets filled with moral dynamite; his every thought springing from knowledge that all of the basic principles in our political order, including conservatism, emerged from the well of the most radical democracy, and that democracy itself is only letting in light and air; at the height of his powers of intellect and judgment; upon the high plateau of middle life, best adapted to noble and enduring achievement, stands the man, the liberal, the progressive, the radical, if you will, wide-eyed, open-minded, calm, resolute, exact in thought, effective in action, the most vivid and virile personality, save one, developed on American soil in half a century. Such, without exaggeration or undue emphasis, is Woodrow Wilson.

The old South has bred great statesmen from the beginning of the Republic. To her greatest, the peerless son of Virginia, we owe the political emancipation of the people from oligarchical rule and the establishment of the political party which has survived the assaults of a century. Now let the new South give to the new Democracy another true leader, armed with the power of his faith in the people and their faith in him, and the quickened spirit which enabled Jefferson to break the bonds of paternalism will again become the glory of the Nation.

THE EDITOR.